



# CREATE the STATE

Core Reforms Engaging Arts  
to Educate

## LEADERS TEAM

Malissa Shriver, Chair, California Arts  
Council Board of Directors  
Craig Cheslog, Principal Advisor to the  
California State Superintendent of  
Public Instruction  
Larry L. Powell, Fresno County  
Superintendent of Schools  
Anne Bown-Crawford, Director, Arcata  
Arts Initiative  
Amy Shimson-Santos, Ph.D., UC Irvine  
Department of Education  
Nidya Paredes, Pepperdine University

## KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The Boeing Company  
Sony Pictures Entertainment  
California Institute of the Arts  
California Alliance for Arts Education  
California Arts Council  
CCSESA Arts Initiative  
California Department of Education  
California State University  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
California County Offices of Education  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
The California Arts Project  
University of California  
California State PTA  
California Community Colleges  
various California private colleges and  
universities

*CREATE the STATE is the consortium of California leaders and stakeholders with the mission to ensure each student reaches his or her full potential by broadening California's educational vision, policy, and practices to promote innovation, economic development, and creativity. The partnership was initiated through the Education Leaders Institute 2011, a program initiated by the National Endowment for the Arts*

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
October 13, 2011

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## More than 130 California leaders tackle creativity in education issues

*A blueprint for California arts education discussed by  
education, arts and business leaders on October 13-14*

Los Angeles – Education leaders, arts advocates and members of the business community met in Los Angeles for a landmark convocation on how California schools can increase creativity and innovation skills in K-12 education. Over 130 stakeholders met at Loyola Marymount University to participate in the “CREATE the STATE” convocation on October 13 and 14, 2011. (Links to the agenda and live streaming URL are at the end of this release.)

“We have arrived at a crucial juncture when school leaders must rise in chorus to bring visual and performing arts back to schools and make arts education an essential part of the K-12 education experience,” said Larry L. Powell, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. “Creativity and innovation are catalysts both for academic achievement and for the global economy of the 21st century.”

The “CREATE” in “CREATE the STATE” stands for “Core Reforms Engaging Arts to Educate” and describes the aim of the unique partnership to expand California’s educational vision, policy, and practices to promote creativity, innovation, and economic development.

“In a global economy that is driven by knowledge and ideas, arts education belongs at the forefront, complementing curriculum that will ultimately develop the next generation of innovators,” said Sarah Murr, arts and culture subject matter expert for The Boeing Company’s Global Corporate Citizenship department.

Two state agencies, the California Department of Education and the California Arts Council – along with statewide professionals in the arts,

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education, and industry – are working together to address structural obstacles to arts education and debunk the myths that undermine access to arts education. This statewide process is meant to align diverse stakeholders --arts advocates, policy makers, industry representatives, community leaders, secondary and higher educational institutions, and the nonprofit sector – under one common goal.

“California leaders see this as critical time for arts education given the new political and policy context provided by the election of a new Governor, new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the appointment of new members of the State Board of Education earlier this year,” said Craig Cheslog, Principal Advisor to the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction. “State Superintendent Tom Torlakson believes we must enhance arts education in California’s public schools. The arts provide inspiration, help prevent dropouts, and provide a way to ensure our students learn the skills they need to reach their full potential in the 21st Century.”

Key speakers at the CREATE the STATE convocation include:

- **Yong Zhao:** The Presidential Chair, Associate Dean, and Professor in the Department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership at the College of Education in the University of Oregon;
- **Kevin Kirkpatrick:** Executive Vice President/Principal, at the Metropolitan Group’s Chicago office and a leader in strategic communications;
- **Joan Straumanis:** Former Program Director in the Science of Learning Centers program at the National Science Foundation and experienced higher education administrator;
- **Steven Lavine:** President, California Institute of the Arts;
- **James Catterall:** Primary Investigator at the Center for Research on Creativity at CalArts, Professor Emeritus, UCLA Graduate School of Education, and author of publications on arts education.

Also facilitating open dialogue among the attendees will be

- **Malissa Feruzzi Shriver** (Chair of the California Arts Council),
- **Craig Cheslog** (Principal Advisor to the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction),
- **Larry L. Powell** (Fresno County Superintendent of Schools),
- **Anne Bown-Crawford** (Director of the Arcata Arts Initiative),

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- **Amy Shimson-Santos** (Ph.D., UC Irvine Department of Education),  
and
- **Nidya Paredes** (Pepperdine University)

Loyola Marymount University, the Fresno County Department of Education and The Boeing Corporation are sponsors of the “CREATE the STATE” summit, in addition to the California Arts Council and the California Department of Education.

Policy leaders had noted that access to quality public schools and arts education varies, and that California faces unique challenges because of its diverse student population. Of the state’s 6.25 million K-12 students, 1.5 million are English language learners; 678,000 receive special-education services; and 3.25 million receive free or partially subsidized lunches. Nearly two-thirds of California’s K-12 students attend schools where arts education has declined in the classroom. Recent national studies have noted a 49% decline in arts education for African Americans and a 40% decline for Latino students.

To reverse this trend, leaders in California are working together to build public will, impact public policy, and design innovative approaches for funding and stability for arts education. The group’s core belief include a recognition that all students need access to the arts and innovative learning strategies to prepare themselves for high school graduation, college and post-high school learning, and successful careers.

“It is time to talk about restoring arts education to schools as a tool to combat issues like low test scores, high drop-out rates, significant incarceration numbers, and the struggling economy,” said Malissa Feruzzi Shriver, Chair of the California Arts Council. “Research has shown arts education’s impact on improving test scores, building critical thinking skills, improving self-confidence, and increasing critical cognitive skills like focus and problem solving – attributes employers want most in employees of the 21st century.”

This convocation is one of a series for the Arts Create California team, with a follow-up conference in spring 2012 where a working plan will be announced. The consortium of California leaders and stakeholders was

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AGENDA: <http://www.cac.ca.gov/create/ConveningAgenda.pdf>

LIVE STREAMING: <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/create-the-state-convening>

Members of the press interested in talking to members of the CREATE the STATE leadership team and convocation members may contact Mary Beth Barber, information officer at the California Arts Council, to set up an interview: [mbarber@cac.ca.gov](mailto:mbarber@cac.ca.gov) or 916-322-6588.

*For members of the press interested in attending the CREATE the STATE convocation -- **Parking:*** Members of the press attending the Create the State conference on October 13 and 14 should enter via the Lincoln Blvd entrance and stop at the Information Booth/Security gate to obtain a campus parking permit and map. Visitors to Loyola Marymount University CANNOT park on campus without a permit.